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TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS PRIORITY

INFO RUDKEBQ/AMEMBASSY BERN 4748

RUFHOL/AMEMBASSY BONN 2128

RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 2252

RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 8209

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RUEKJCS/ JCS WASHDC 2251

RUFHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 4359

RUEKJCS/ SECDEF WASHDC 5159

BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 168206

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, VM, US

SUBJECT: POW/MIA AFFAIRS: PRESS GUIDANCE ON SENATOR

PERCY'S MIA STATEMENT

1. (LOU) FYI: ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RICHARD ARMITAGE, ACCOMPANIED BY ANN GRIFFITHS OF THE LEAGUE OF FAMILIES AND NSC AND STATE REPRESENTATIVES, BRIEFED SENATORS PERCY, HELMS, MURKOWSKI AND ZORINSKI JUNE 5 ON THE FEBRUARY ARMITAGE MISSION TO HANOI.

PERCY GAVE A STATEMENT TO THE PRESS FOLLOWING THE BRIEFING THAT WAS VERY HELPFUL, CALLING ON HANOI TO CARRY OUT ITS PLEDGES; KEEP POW/MIA ACCOUNTING SEPARATE FROM POLITICAL ISSUES; AND SPECIFICALLY, TO SCHEDULE THE NEXT TECHNICAL MEETING IN HANOI.

1. (U) FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED FOR JUNE 6 PRESS BRIEFING, BUT HAS SO FAR NOT BEEN USED. ADDRESSEE POSTS MAY USE IN RESPONDING TO ANY INQUIRIES:

BEGIN GUIDANCE:

Q: THE WASHINGTON POST TODAY REPORTED THAT SENATOR PERCY CALLED ON HANOI TO MAKE GOOD ON A PLEDGE TO RETURN THE REMAINS OF EIGHT AMERICANS MISSING FROM THE

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VIETNAM WAR. REUTERS STATES THAT SENATOR PERCY SAID VIETNAM HAD NOT MADE GOOD ON PLEDGES TO REDOUBLE EFFORTS TO LOCATE MISSING U.S. SERVICEMEN FROM THE VIETNAM WAR. CAN YOU COMMENT?

A: DURING THE VISIT TO HANOI OF A DELEGATION LED BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ARMITAGE IN FEBRUARY 1984, BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT COOPERATION ON RESOLVING THE POW/MIA ISSUE WOULD BE ACCELERATED. SEVERAL SPECIFIC STEPS TO ACHIEVE THIS WERE DISCUSSED, AND IT WAS AGREED TO RESUME THE QUARTERLY TECHNICAL MEETINGS IN HANOI IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE VIETNAMESE AGREED TO A TECHNICAL MEETING IN MID-APRIL, AND THEN POSTPONED IT FOR "TECHNICAL REASONS". WE ARE STILL WAITING FOR THEM TO PROPOSE NEW DATES.

THE VIETNAMESE HAVE INDICATED PUBLICLY THEY PLAN TO TURN OVER THE REMAINS OF EIGHT SERVICEMEN TO THE U.S AT THE NEXT MEETING. WE HOPE THAT THIS REPORT IS TRUE. WE SHARE SENATOR PERCY'S CONCERN THAT THE VIETNAMESE FOLLOW THROUGH ON THEIR PLEDGE OF ACCELERATED COOPERATION ON POW/MIA MATTERS.

THE VIETNAMESE HAVE AGREED WITH US THAT THE POW/MIA PROBLEM IS A HUMANITARIAN ISSUE TO BE DEALT WITH SEPARATELY FROM OTHER MATTERS. WE LOOK TO THE VIETNAMESE TO KEEP THEIR FEBRUARY PLEDGE TO ACCELERATE COOPERATION ON RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE.

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END OF MESSAGE

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